

THE CHRISTIAN VINDICATION
OF PATRIOTISM

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OF PATRIOTISM

THE BAIRD LECTURE FOR 1920

BY

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TO
MY WIFE

P R E F A C E.

WHEN the Baird Trustees did me the honour to ask me to be their Lecturer for 1920, the consideration which chiefly constrained me to accede to the request in the face of much misgiving was the instant presentment to my mind of a subject I should like to treat. Such an immediate view of a topic, while it includes no necessary guarantee of competence to deal with it, may be held to add confirmation to a call otherwise received.

Now that the subject has been brought down from the vagueness of a conception to the treatment of the following pages, I am inevitably conscious of the inadequacy of my presentation of it; but I am more persuaded than ever of the critical importance of the theme itself, and of the timeliness of some discussion of it in our age. In a period when the most conspicuous feature of world-politics is the almost universal uprising of the "nationalist" spirit, the question as to how

far this spirit is congruous with religious ideals and can be baptised into Christian service seems to me one of the most important with which Christian ethics can be called to deal.

I have made my reading on the topic as wide as limited time and opportunity have allowed, and have tried to add authority and brightness to my pages by free use in quotation of the fruits of this reading. It is a pleasure to name one book in particular as a principal creditor: 'The History of English Patriotism' (2 vols.), by Esmé Wingfield Stratford. Without the facts and references supplied by Mr Stratford the sixth chapter of this book could not have been projected.

I owe a debt of gratitude to Professor G. S. Duncan, O.B.E., of St Andrews, for assistance in reading the proofs and for many helpful suggestions; also to my former neighbour, Mr Alexander Miller, Inspector of Taxes, Inverness, for very kindly preparing the Index. The Rev. W. H. Rankine of Kirkmichael had read most of the manuscript before his lamented death, and I am glad that the contents had his general approval as well as his friendly criticism.

ROBERT STEVENSON.

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